

# Interracial News Service

A DIGEST OF TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN HUMAN RELATIONS

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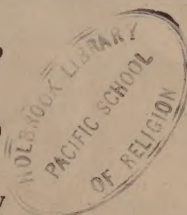
NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 1954

NUMBER 6

*"... brethren ... dwell together in unity!"*

—(Ps. 133:1)

A Message for Race Relations Sunday, February  
13, 1955, from the National Council of the  
Churches of Christ in the United States of America



*Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!*

Psalms 133:1

*Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us?*

Mal. 2:10

Revised Standard Version

All life is one, created and sustained by the power and the love of God. There is a kinship among all living things that is prior to all separateness. This unity is at the heart of life because life is the creation of God. Man, in addition to being a child of nature, a child of life, is also, and precisely, a child of God. "And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good." The acceptance of this fundamental belief that man is a child of God by creation carries with it a deep and abiding responsibility for all men of whatever faith or religious insight, to dwell together as brothers in unity.

The Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches stated "It is Jesus Christ, who revealed God as Father, and who died for all men, reconciling them to God and to each other by His Cross. From every race and nation a new people of God is created, in which the power of the Spirit overcomes racial pride and fear." This new people of God has laid upon them an even greater moral imperative to dwell in unity with all men as brothers.

As a child of God, a man is a member of one family, the human family. Whatever increases the sense of kinship one with another, brings man closer to his Father; whatever destroys this feeling of oneness, drives man away from his Father. Any and all attitudes, moods, concepts, feelings, customs, practices, laws, personal and collective acts, that arbitrarily separate men are against the human family. If they are against the family, they are opposed to the will of the Father. If they are against God, then, whatever may be the bases for them — ignorance, fear, prejudice, or aught else — they are sin.

Racial prejudice in any and all forms is contrary to the will and the design of God. Racial prejudice, with the long series of unhappy incidents that flow from it, is not merely bad, unfortunate, unrighteous — it is *sin*. Let this teaching be proclaimed. *He who wrongs his brother, sins against God.*

Many individuals and groups are struggling to overcome the sin of racial prejudice in our society. The barriers erected by prejudice are being breached in many areas of life. The unanimous decision of the United States Supreme Court declaring racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional, marks the promise of a fuller life for all people in the nation. This is cause for rejoicing.

"Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!" This, many churches have yet to discover. There are signs that they are on the way, but time is running out. God grants the churches grace to become a dwelling place for brothers.

[The matter in these pages is presented for the reader's information. Unless so stated, it is not to be construed as reflecting the attitudes or positions of the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations or of The National Council of Churches.]



# ABOUT RACIALLY INCLUSIVE CHURCHES

## *Do you know that —*

- ..... in three Protestant denominations comprising 13,597 churches, there were (in 1951) 1,331 predominantly white churches reporting non-white persons in their Christian fellowship as members or attendants?
- ..... the 1,331 churches constitute 9.8 per cent of the total number of churches in these three denominations?
- ..... 110 of these 1,331 racially inclusive churches are located in the southeastern region of the U. S.?
- ..... 45 of the 110 in the Southeast reported Negroes as members or in attendance?
- ✓..... of 237,000 church members, 26 individuals were reported to have left their churches because of the process of expanding the circle of Christian fellowship to include non-white persons?
- ..... in *every instance* of appraisal after the departure of a person over this issue, the ministers indicated increased spiritual insight, greater warmth of fellowship or greater human assets to the life and work of the church?
- ..... the length of time used to prepare Christians for the inclusion of persons of non-white skin color in their churches is not *necessarily* related to the degree of ease with which the change comes about?
- ..... forthright movement directly toward the goal of 'open' fellowship in the local church has avoided much of the indecision and friction that has been found to develop often during long-range programs of 're-education'?
- ..... the anticipated behavior predicted *by* Christians *of* themselves is far more serious and opposed to open Christian fellowship than is their actual behavior when they face a real situation in their church?
- ..... frequently, it has been found that a large majority of persons in a local church are not opposed to open fellowship in policy and practice?
- ..... frequently, also, open fellowship in policy and practice in the local church is resisted by a vocal minority who often control the behavior of persons uncommitted in their thinking to either side of the issue?
- ..... in view of such small group control, local leadership on this aspect of Christian fellowship
  - does not lead the majority to express its will on the matter in many instances?
  - is often reduced to a mere reflection of the wishes of this numerical minority?
- ..... a dynamic application of the fundamental Christian belief in evangelization of all people without regard to race, color or nationality background
  - produces a fellowship of basic acceptance in their local churches?
  - helps to remove Protestant churches from their *indifferent* or *defensive* position with reference to the policy and/or practice of a racially inclusive fellowship?
- ..... patterns of behavior and social interaction among Christians which fail to convey an unmistakable WELCOME to all, limit the quality of inclusive fellowship in a local church to a superficial or "front-room" type?
- ..... the genuine opportunity for qualified persons of racial minority groups to serve in leadership capacities on the basis of ability is *one* of the surest ways to convey an *unmistakable* WELCOME?
- ..... the kinds of behavior and social activity among Christians both in the church and in the community are the main determinants of the nature and extent of an 'open' fellowship?
- ..... opposition to a racially inclusive Christian fellowship in the local church is more likely to occur when the policy position of the local church leadership is, not known or, not clearly indicated, than it is when local church policy is clear and known?
- ..... recent documented research\* indicates that the above stated points are highly important to the Protestant churches in their efforts to make a significant contribution in this area of their life and work?
- ..... you can receive additional information on these matters by writing to:

THE DEPARTMENT OF RACIAL AND CULTURAL RELATIONS  
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST

297 FOURTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK 10, NEW YORK

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\*In 1950 three denominations became cooperatively engaged in a joint research project to examine the processes through which local congregations of their own groups had moved toward, or had achieved some degree of racial inclusiveness in their own churches and organizations.

This is a project nearing completion by Alfred S. Kramer and had its origin at the Center for Human Relations Studies, New York University. It was developed through the cooperative efforts of the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations, National Council of Churches of Christ in the U. S. A., and the social action commissions of the three Protestant communions. These were: the United Lutheran Church in America, the Congregational Christian Churches, and the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. (Some of the data on the Congregational Christian Churches comes from an earlier (1946) survey by L. Maynard Catchings). It is emphasized that this research project does not presume to present a complete cross-section of racial inclusion at all levels even within the three denominations which have benefitted the cause by engaging in this examination.



**In Minnesota**

Seventy-seven per cent of Minnesota's men and women\* "are in favor of having white and Negro people 'worshipping together in the same churches'."

This was one of the findings of "The Minnesota Poll," which is an impartial scientific home-interview survey on what Minnesotans think about leading topics of the day. The Minnesota Poll is conducted and maintained as a public service by the Minneapolis Tribune. (*Minneapolis Sunday Tribune*, June 27).

**Denominational Survey**

Disciples of Christ are inaugurating a nationwide survey to determine how many of their churches are racially inclusive. Barton Hunter, executive of the Disciples' Department of Social Welfare . . . says that the study is a projection of the one-year emphasis on the church's ministry to minority groups which was launched in July. He reports that in Texas the Disciples have set up a committee on work with Spanish-speaking people to help racially inclusive churches become more effective. As an example of successful integration in this field, he cited First Christian Church in Harlington, Texas, where Spanish-speaking people are members (two of them serve as deacons) and Spanish-language services are conducted on Sunday afternoons. . . . (*The Christian Century*, October 13).

**DESEGREGATION**  
**State Actions**

Louisiana, by a smashing majority of 5 to 1, and Georgia, by a contrasting margin of but 9 to 8 have approved amendments to their constitutions designed to offer detours around the Supreme Court decision against racial segregation in the nation's public schools. The framers of the Louisiana amendment have noted that the Supreme Court's decision hinges solely on the criterion of race. And they have now written into their constitution a proviso that under the state's inherent police powers segregation may be enforced on the basis of public health and morals.

The Georgia amendment would permit any unit of government to satisfy its obligation to provide public education by making direct grants of tax money to parents or guardians with which to pay for schooling in private institutions.

The impact of these changes in state organic law should not be fully assessed before the December arguments on the subject are concluded and the Supreme Court issues its enforcement decrees. For should the high court leave the formulation of such decrees to federal district courts, and allow such courts considerable discretion in taking cognizance of local problems, much of the connotation of 'defiance' could be removed from these amendments.

\*The total sample size of this particular survey was 600 cases.

These developments exemplify the endeavors to cushion a great social change which this newspaper has been forecasting ever since the Supreme Court ruling became a probability. The Louisiana expedient has its origin in Deep South areas where cultural retardation, from whatever cause, has become so associated with color as to be indistinguishable in common thinking.

These are things the rest of the country must understand if Americans are to negotiate these transitional years as one people. (*Christian Science Monitor*, November 5).

**A Major Resource**

(The New York Herald Tribune held a Forum, October 18-19, during which Dr. George S. Mitchell, executive director of the Southern Regional Council, made an address. Among the factors discussed in his presentation were the roles of religious leaders and the churches in solving the issues in the process of desegregating the nation's public schools.)

He declared:  
"One great institution reaches all the counties and all the towns and cities, and that is the church. Religion in the Western World has been the taproot of democratic institutions. Time was when the parish and its vestry governed. And trade unionism in many parts of the South is still today visibly sprouting out of the people's experience of local church administration. Close your eyes and open your ears in a meeting of cast iron pipe workers in Birmingham, and you would think you were in a country church. The church in the South reaches every participant in the legal and political struggle over what to do about the schools. . . . And church leadership in nearly all parts of the South has shown a high loyalty to religious duty." (*New York Herald Tribune*, October 21).

**Educators Confer**

Forty-four of the nation's leading social scientists have formed a committee of consultants which will seek to prevent outbreaks of racial tension in connection with desegregation of public schools. . . .

During the past weeks members of the committee were in Milford, Delaware, and White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, two communities where overt frictions arose following integration of Negro children in white schools in accordance with the United States Supreme Court ruling of last May. Their purpose was to observe the start and development of community tensions, to analyze the forces at work, and to recommend methods for preventing such disturbances there and elsewhere.

Alfred McClung Lee, chairman of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Brooklyn College, heads the committee of consultants. . . . Robert M. MacIver is honorary chairman, and Kenneth B. Clark, associate professor of psychology at City College of New York and research director of the Northside

Center for Child Development, is vice-chairman. . . . (*St. Louis Argus*, October 29).

**HOUSING**  
**In Chicago**

Albert M. Cole, Administrator of the Housing and Home Finance Agency, (recently) declared that the Federal Government has a "solemn responsibility" to help correct inequities that bar colored families from the housing market and to obtain an unprecedented expansion of housing for such families. . . .

Mr. Cole called for responsible action by the local community and the housing industry in support of a strong Federal program to correct housing conditions among colored families, and said the Federal Government would "look over their shoulders" to see if they are making positive efforts to meet the problem.

In line with this policy, Mr. Cole announced that he had called on Mayor Martin H. Kennelly of Chicago to meet with Rev. Bernard J. Sheil, senior auxiliary bishop of the Roman Catholic archdiocese of Chicago, and Walter Reuther, president of the CIO, to bring a prompt end to racial disorders at the Trumbull Park public housing project in Chicago. . . .

The HHFA Administration also outlined a program of Federal action and policy to enlarge housing opportunities for colored families and provide equal opportunity for them in the housing market.

As a part of this program, he said, a national advisory conference on minority housing will be called shortly by him for December "to develop practical, positive lines of continuing action to bring to minority families the level of housing opportunity that is afforded to others." . . . (*The Call*, November 5).

**In Texas**

Taylor, the little Texas town that came into the national spotlight last year when it selected a Negro as its "Man of the Year," (recently) revealed it has taken another quiet step forward. The town has an interracial housing project where Negroes, whites and Latin Americans live together in complete harmony.

The 70-unit project has been operating quietly since April, 1952, with 35 Negro families and 33 white and Latin American families. . . .

The executive director of the project, an energetic young white woman, Mrs. Mary Olson, explained . . . that this venture got started when in 1949 and 1950 there were serious outbreaks of polio in the slum area where the project is now located. . . .

Disturbed city officials and families got together and began working out some plans. Out of these plans grew this project with funds borrowed from the government. . . .

The families began moving in and from the beginning there were no up-  
roars or trouble over race.



"Most of these people had already lived together in the slums," Mrs. Olson said, "so why should there be any trouble when they moved in the area in new homes?"

With this task accomplished, Taylor noted with pride that polio cases and other sickness and diseases decreased. Thus far this year there have been no cases of polio in the area. . . . (*The Call*, October 29).

## PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION

### Hotels

Workmen will plunge shovels into the golden dust of Las Vegas the next few weeks to launch a unique and spectacular experiment in race relations.

And by the time they complete the \$3,500,000 Continental Hotel . . . the present strong racial barriers in Las Vegas may come in for some powerful shaking.

For the Continental will be an interracial hotel — a resort of luxury and magnificence rivaling any in Las Vegas, but extending its hospitality to persons of all colors and creeds. . . .

It got its initial push from the owners of the town's other hotels, for, by their refusal to open their establishments to Negroes, they spurred colored leaders to seek a way in which their people might enjoy the expensive pastimes Las Vegas offered. . . .

It has been three years in the planning, and its board of directors includes Norman O. Houston, president of the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company and the internationally famous Negro architect Paul R. Williams, who designed the Continental.

One million dollars worth of the stock was held out for sale exclusively to Negroes, a plan that involved introducing many of them — particularly the 417,000 Negroes in Los Angeles County, California, from which Las Vegas draws much of its patronage — to the business of stockholding.

Much of the backing for the venture came from Americans of Oriental extraction, who form a major portion of Southern California's population. . . . (*Pittsburg Courier*, November 6).

### Transportation

The Justice Department . . . asked the Interstate Commerce Commission to extend the ban on segregation to trains traveling across state lines. The Department filed a brief with the ICC in support of a suit by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People against 12 railroads serving the South.

"Just as our Constitution is color blind and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens," the Justice Dept. brief said, "so, too, is the Interstate Commerce Act. . . . The time has come for the Commission to declare unequivocally that a Negro passenger is free to travel the length and breadth of this land in the same manner as any other passenger." . . . (*New York Post*, October 19).

## COURT RULINGS

### On Campus Activities

The Supreme Court supported . . . a lower court's ruling upholding the right of the State University of New York to bar national fraternities and sororities from its campuses. . . .

The court's action left standing a decision by a three-judge Federal court that a university edict requiring social organizations on the campuses to sever their affiliations with national groups was a proper exercise of its authority.

Also involved was a ruling of the university's trustees that no social organization would be allowed to operate that barred students "on account of race, color, religion, creed, national origin or other artificial criteria." . . .

The edict of the trustees was issued in October, 1953. Its primary purpose was to abolish racial discrimination at the state institutions. . . . (*New York Times*, November 9).

### On Job Discrimination

The Central of Georgia Railway must cease alleged job discrimination against its Negro brakemen and pay them compensation, a federal judge ruled.

U. S. District Court Judge Hobart Grooms issued the order (October 29).

Negro brakemen from Columbus and Macon, Ga., and Birmingham and Dothan, Ala., had testified they were denied seniority rights in bidding and training for certain jobs. These positions, they said, were limited to white employees.

Judge Grooms ruled that the railroad must pay the brakemen a sum equal to the difference between their wages and (the) pay for the jobs which they claimed they were denied. The payments will be for a 12-month period.

Grooms will appoint an impartial committee to fix the amount of compensation. (*The Atlanta Constitution*, October 31).

## SOUTH AFRICA

The Archbishop of York, Dr. Cyril F. Garbett, has condemned the South African Government's racial policy as unchristian, tyrannical, and dangerous.

The leading Anglican churchman accused Prime Minister Daniel F. Malan's government of carrying out arbitrary acts of mass deportation on the lines of a Nazi or Communist state. . . .

Dr. Garbett said that British Christian leaders "no longer have the right to keep silence, and must voice our protest as clearly and uncompromisingly as we did against Hitler."

South Africa's policy, he said, is to "keep the colored or dark races in complete subjection, to refuse them advanced education, and to treat them as a servile class. In pursuit of this policy, they are threatening the Christian missions which have been working for many years with great devotion among the Bantu peoples."

"They claim complete control of the education given by the missions, and the regulations which they propose will make almost impossible Christian work of education. The freedom of the churches will be destroyed by the state in matters of vital importance."

Dr. Garbett added an appeal to the British people to guard against color prejudice here. (*Christian Science Monitor*, November 4).

## WORTHWHILE READING

*Evanston Speaks* (Reports from the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches), World Council of Churches, 156 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y. 50 cents.

*Better Housing for Everyone*, Shirley A. Siegel, Oceana Publications, New York, N. Y. 50 cents.

*Denominational Statements with Reference to a Racially Inclusive Fellowship*, Department of Racial and Cultural Relations, 297 Fourth Ave., New York, N. Y. 10 cents.

*Statements Adopted by Religious Groups Re Segregation in the Public Schools*, Department of Racial and Cultural Relations, 297 Fourth Ave., New York, N. Y. 10 cents.

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